

MILES DAVIS

AT
NEWPORT
1958



COLUMBIA



Original Recordings Supervised
by George Avakian

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|---|--------------------------------|------|
| 1 | Introduction By Willis Conover | 2:16 |
| 2 | Ah-Leu-Cha | 5:53 |
| 3 | Straight, No Chaser | 8:48 |
| 4 | Fran-Dance | 7:14 |
| 5 | Two Bass Hit | 4:11 |
| 6 | Bye Bye Blackbird * | 9:11 |
| 7 | The Theme * | 2:49 |

Miles Davis	trumpet
Cannonball Adderley	alto saxophone
John Coltrane	tenor saxophone
Bill Evans	piano
Paul Chambers	bass
Jimmy Cobb	drums

Thursday, July 3, 1958. Newport, Rhode Island. On this night at the Newport Jazz Festival, six of the most prodigiously talented musicians ever assembled in a working band performed under the charismatic leadership of the pace-setting trumpeter Miles Davis.

Eight months after this appearance, Davis (1926-1991) and company would make a record for Columbia that established cool modality as the predominant strain of improvisational music, the first since Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie burst forth with blazing bebop in the mid-1940s. The Davis album, now widely considered to be the greatest of all jazz LPs, was called *Kind Of Blue*; the six tracks collected herein, however, generate something closer to white heat.

From the moment the leader counts off Charlie Parker's contrapuntal bop staple "Ah-Leu-Cha" at a superhuman tempo, the band is in scorching form. In the understatedly lyrical Davis (whose extroverted side is readily apparent herein), the envelope-pushing tenor saxophonist John Coltrane, and the effervescent alto saxophonist Julian "Cannonball" Adderley, the ensemble boasted a front line whose three powerful musical personalities were as utterly distinctive as they were different from one another, while the rhythm section, with newcomers Jimmy Cobb on drums and the quietly revolutionary pianist Bill Evans joining virtuoso bassist Paul Chambers, developed its own singular approach to swinging. Together, the sextet's approach was, by turns, flexible and soaring, probing and fearless, forward-looking and in-the-tradition.

Taken from the widely-praised boxed set *Miles Davis & John Coltrane: The Complete Columbia Recordings 1955-1961* and annotated by Grammy®-winner Bob Blumenthal, *Miles Davis At Newport 1958* recalls a masterful set. Remixed and remastered, the music has never sounded more alive.



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MILES
ON
COLUMBIA

'58 Sessions

(Featuring "Stella By Starlight")

CK/CT 47835

A Tribute To Jack Johnson CK/CT 47036

Agharta C2K/C2T 46799

Aura CK 63962

Ballads CK/CJT 44151

Big Fun C2K 63973

Bitches Brew (2 CD/2 CT Set) C2K/C2T 65774

Black Beauty: Miles Davis Live At Fillmore West C2K 65138

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The Complete Miles Davis Quintet 1965-1968

(6 CD Box) C6K 67398

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(7 CD Box) CXK 66955

The Complete Bitches Brew Sessions (8/69-2/70)

(4 CD Box) C4K 65570

The Complete Miles Davis (w/John Coltrane) 1955-1961

C6K 65833

Cookin' At The Plugged Nickel CK 40645

Dark Magus: Live At Carnegie Hall C2K 65137

Decoy CK 38991

E.S.P. CK 65683

Filles De Kilimanjaro CK/CT 46116

Get Up With It CK 63970

Greatest Hits CK 65418

In A Silent Way CK/CJT 40580

In Person Friday Night At The Blackhawk

(April 21, 1961) CK 44257

In Person Saturday Night At The

Blackhawk (April 22, 1961) CK 44425

Jazz At The Plaza CK 85245

Kind Of Blue CK/CT 64935

Live At Newport (1958) CK 85202

Live — Evil C2K 65135

Love Songs CK 65653

Miles Ahead CK 65121

Miles Davis At Carnegie Hall:

The Complete Concert C2K 65027

Miles Davis In Concert:

Live At Philharmonic Hall C2K 65140

Miles Davis Live At Fillmore:

Live At The Fillmore East C2K 65139

Miles In The Sky CK 65684

Miles Smiles CK 65682

Milestones CK 85203

Nefertiti CK 65681

On The Corner CK 63980

Pangaea C2K/C2T 46115

Porgy And Bess CK 65141

Quiet Nights CK 65293

'Round About Midnight CK 85201

Sarah Vaughan In Hi-Fi (as sideman) CK 65117

Seven Steps To Heaven CK 48827

Sketches Of Spain CK 65142

Someday My Prince Will Come CK 65919

Sorcerer CK 65680

Super Hits CK/CT 85186

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The Best Of The Miles Davis Quintet 1965-1968 CK 65945

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This Is Jazz #8 - Acoustic CK 64616

This Is Jazz #22: Miles Davis Plays Ballads CK 65038

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You're Under Arrest CK/PCT 40023



- 1 INTRODUCTION 2:16 WILLIS CONNOVER
- 2 AH-LEU-CHA 5:53 C. PARKER
- 3 STRAIGHT, NO CHASER 8:48 T. MONK
- 4 FRAN-DANCE 7:14 M. DAVIS
- 5 TWO BASS HIT 4:11 J. LEWIS-D. GILLESPIE
- 6 BYE BYE BLACKBIRD 9:11 M. DIXON-R. HENDERSON
- 7 THE THEME 2:49 M. DAVIS

Recorded live at the Newport Jazz Festival,
Newport, Rhode Island on July 3, 1958.

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#6 & 7 originally issued on *Newport Jazz Festival Live* (C2 38262).

John Coltrane appeared courtesy of Prestige Records.

MILES DAVIS TRUMPET
CANNONBALL ADDERLEY ALTO SAXOPHONE
JOHN COLTRANE TENOR SAXOPHONE
BILL EVANS PIANO
PAUL CHAMBERS BASS
JIMMY COBB DRUMS

The Miles Davis Sextet

experienced two significant personnel changes in the spring of 1958. Philly Joe Jones left to start his own group, and was replaced by Jimmy Cobb, a less spectacular though equally hard-swinging drummer who had been heard extensively with his ex-wife Dinah Washington. Pianist Red Garland was also replaced because, as Davis explained in his autobiography, "I had moved past the point where he could contribute what I wanted in the sound of the band. I needed a piano player who was into the modal thing." On George Russell's recommendation, Davis hired Bill Evans, who had recorded only one album of his own to that point as well as notable sessions with Russell and Charles Mingus. Davis loved what he called Evans' "quiet fire" and his more understated rhythmic approach, and featured it in the first studio session that Evans and Cobb made with Davis in May.

Six weeks after that date, the band was at the Newport Jazz Festival, the same edition of Newport that yielded several live albums on various labels and the film *Jazz On A Summer's Day*. The Sextet appeared on a program dedicated to Duke Ellington, but Davis typically chose to honor the Maestro with a program of his band's own state-of-the-art music. The entire set was taped, in what was the first official live recordings of a working Davis band. Much of the set initially appeared as half of a 1964 LP that also featured Thelonious Monk at a later Newport Festival. Wynton Kelly was erroneously identified as Davis' pianist on that album, and a later CD reissue mistakenly gave the recording date as 1963. This is the Davis Sextet with Evans, however, recorded shortly after he and Cobb had joined the band, and the Newport set is presented here in its entirety.

Willis Conover's introduction of the band's members provides a perspective on their relative popularity at the time: Cannonball Adderley gets a far more vociferous response from the crowd than John Coltrane, and the virtually unknown Evans gets a tepid reception from fans who were possibly expecting Garland. This does not deter the Sextet from starting with "Ah-Leu-Cha" at a bruising tempo that finds Cobb operating in Philly Joe's zone behind the leader's very centered solo. The 1955 Miles Davis Quintet had recorded this Charlie Parker line for its Columbia debut, *'Round About Midnight*, and a comparison with the earlier



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studio version will reflect both the conceptual and technical growth of Coltrane: After he has shredded the chord changes, Adderley's more conventional virtuosity and fondness for half-quoted licks sound rather parochial.

All but Cobb solo on Thelonious Monk's "Straight, No Chaser," which the earlier edition of the Sextet had recorded in February for the *Milestones* album. The most notable aspect of the performance is the medium-tempo groove that bassist Paul Chambers and Cobb set behind Davis. It is a thing of beauty, awaiting only the arrival of Wynton Kelly in the band to attain perfection; and it illustrates why Davis would have Kelly spell Evans for one track on the seminal *Kind Of Blue*, the finger-snapping "Freddie Freeloader." Here, Evans sounds quizzical and rather removed from the momentum of his rhythm partners.

"Fran-Dance" was the newest tune on the program, a variation on the venerable novelty number "Put Your Little Foot Right Out" titled in tribute to Davis' wife Frances. The Sextet cut an immortal studio version in May (which can be found on the Columbia/Legacy reissue *'58 Sessions* as well as the boxed set *Miles Davis & John Coltrane: The Complete Columbia Recordings 1955-1961*), and the musicians were clearly beginning to stretch on the form. Chambers, for one, takes much greater

latitude in his accompaniment, sounding almost like Scott LaFaro during moments of the first piano chorus. Adderley is also more committed, stretching beyond easy figures as he attacks the unusual form, and Coltrane explores his personal patterns; but no one overshadows the leader's seductive muted work.

This version of the Dizzy Gillespie/John Lewis tune "Two Bass Hit" is closer to the one the Quintet recorded in 1955 (included on the CD reissue of *'Round About Midnight*) than the Sextet version that appears on *Milestones* and features both saxophonists. Coltrane has the solo spotlight to himself here, and takes the kind of agitated choruses that led some to characterize him as an "angry" tenor.

The tenor saxophonist also dominates "Bye Bye Blackbird," where he takes the longest solo and Adderley lays out. Perhaps Davis was making his fans come to grips with Coltrane's ever-more-challenging style by allotting the saxophonist so much space. Davis himself displays great continuity in his solo, despite taking a more abstract course than he pursued on the famous 1956 studio version included in *'Round About Midnight*. Evans is as close as he ever got to Red Garland on the introduction and coda.

Davis quickly removes his Harmon mute and launches "The Theme" as "Blackbird" ends. This version of his venerable sign-off number features the Davis trumpet as well as Chambers and Cobb, and ties up a festival set that offers a particularly revealing view of Coltrane in the midst of his "sheets of sound" period.

—Bob Blumenthal, October 2000




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The history of jazz begins in 1917, and Columbia Records was right there at the inception. The label, which as a descendant of the Columbia Gramophone Company could already claim pioneering achievements in the development of the phonograph, the recording cylinder, the 78 rpm disc and the two-sided record, was the scene of the first studio session by the Original Dixieland Jazz band, as well as another seminal 1917 session by W.C. Handy's Orchestra of Memphis. Over the next three decades, through its own recording efforts and the purchase of such labels as O'keh, Brunswick

Columbia's introduction of the 33 1/3 LP in 1948 launched two decades of recordings that emphasized influential small groups led by Erroll Garner, Dave Brubeck, Miles Davis and Thelonious Monk. Larger ensembles were also documented, including the unequaled Miles Davis/Gil Evans collaborations, the combustible mid-size groups of Charles Mingus and some of the early mergers of jazz and classical music involving Gunther Schuller. Columbia's historic first live recordings at the Newport Jazz Festival in 1956 returned the Duke Ellington Orchestra to its

and Vocation, Columbia's holdings came to include seminal music by Mamie Smith, King Oliver, Louis Armstrong's Hot Fives and Sevens, Fletcher Henderson, Duke Ellington, Bix Beiderbecke, Bessie Smith, Ethel Waters, Teddy Wilson, Billie Holiday, Mildred Bailey and Red Norvo, Count Basie, Benny Goodman, Harry James, Gene Krupa and Woody Herman.

Another evolutionary step was being taken by the end of the '60s. This was fusion, the earliest stages of which can be traced through several of Miles Davis' Columbia recordings. The trumpeter's innovations inspired his sidemen to create groups of their own such as Weather Report, featuring Wayne Shorter and Josef Zawinul, Chick Corea's Return To Forever, Herbie Hancock's

**The
Legacy of
Columbia
Jazz**

Headhunters, John McLaughlin's Mahavishnu Orchestra and the Tony Williams Lifetime, all of which made important recordings on Columbia during the '70s. At the same time, the label documented pioneers of acoustic new music with important recordings by Ornette Coleman, Charles Mingus, Bill Evans, Dexter Gordon and Woody Shaw, plus the more pop-oriented instrumentals of Bob James and Lee Ritenour.

Columbia again led the way when the jazz tradition was revisited by a generation

of young musicians in the '80s. Wynton and Branford Marsalis, Terence Blanchard and Donald Harrison, Marcus Roberts, James Carter, David Sanchez and Leon Parker are among this new wave of musicians that has sparked a new interest in jazz through their Columbia recordings. At the same time, Columbia continued to document jazz in all its varieties, from the classic sounds of Doc Cheatham to the uncategorizable creations of Henry Threadgill. Add the strong reissue activity under the Legacy imprint and Columbia continues its history as jazz's most comprehensive home base.



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COLUMBIA

MILES DAVIS
AT NEWPORT 1958



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